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## PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

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### INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC HYGIENE—ITS INAUGURATION AT PARIS, FRANCE.

By Passed Asst. Surg. S. B. Grubbs, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, representative of the United States on the International Committee.

The International Bureau of Public Hygiene was formally inaugurated at Paris November 10, 1908, and the newly elected director, Mr. Jacques de Cazotte, and Secretary-General Doctor Potevin were installed in office by the committee, composed of one representative from each of the countries which have agreed to support the newly created bureau.

The idea of having a central and international office for the purpose of gathering and distributing information concerning the graver epidemic diseases, especially cholera, plague, and yellow fever, was first presented for consideration at the international sanitary convention of Paris, in 1903, although it had been advocated for some time previously by many sanitarians, notably the late Professor Proust, of Paris. At the request of the convention of 1903, the French Government undertook the task of presenting to the nations interested propositions regarding the organization of such a bureau. These propositions were submitted in a final form in August, 1907, and a conference was invited by the Government of the French Republic, at the instance of the Government of the Kingdom of Italy. This conference was held at Rome, December 3, 1907, the delegates being empowered to sign, ad referendum, such formal arrangement as might be adopted.

The following governments were represented: Belgium, Brazil, British India, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States—the delegates from the latter being Passed Asst. Surg. A. J. McLaughlin, of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, and Mr. R. S. Reynolds Hitt, first secretary of the embassy at Rome.

After due consideration and some modification of the original text, the arrangement and organic statutes were, on December 9, 1907, signed by all the delegates, with the exception of the representative from Roumania, and were ratified by the President of the United States, by and with the advice of the Senate, on February 15, 1908.

The arrangement signed at Rome is as follows:

The governments of Belgium, Brazil, Spain, the United States, the French Republic, Great Britain and Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Switzerland, and the Government of His Highness the Khedive of Egypt, having judged it useful to organize the International Office of Public Hygiene contemplated in the sanitary

convention of Paris, under date of December 3, 1903, have resolved to conclude an arrangement to this effect, and have agreed as follows:

#### ARRANGEMENTS.

ARTICLE 1. The high contracting parties engage to found and maintain an international office of public hygiene, of which the seat shall be in Paris.

ART. 2. The office operates under the authority and control of a committee formed of the delegates of the contracting governments. The composition and attributions of this committee, as well as the organization and the powers of the said office, are determined by the organic statutes which are annexed to the present arrangement, and which are considered as forming an integral part of it.

ART. 3. The cost of installations, as well as the annual expense of operating and maintaining the office, are covered by the contributions of the contracting states as established by the conditions proposed by the organic statutes contemplated in article 2.

ART. 4. The amounts representing the contributive part of each of the contracting states are paid over by these latter at the commencement of each year, through the intermediary of the ministry of foreign affairs, into the government deposit and consignment office, from which they shall be drawn out as needed, on order of the director of the office.

ART. 5. The high contracting parties reserve the right of applying to the present arrangement, by common accord, such modifications as experience shall demonstrate to be useful.

ART. 6. The governments which have not signed the present arrangement are admitted to adhere to it on their request. This adhesion shall be notified through diplomatic channels to the Royal Government of Italy, and by it to the other contracting governments. It will include the obligations to participate in the expense of the office, under the conditions contemplated by article 3.

ART. 7. The present arrangement shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be deposited at Rome as soon as possible. It shall be put in execution from the date at which the deposit of the ratifications shall have been effected.

ART. 8. The present arrangement is concluded for a period of seven years. At the expiration of this term it will continue in force for new periods of seven years among the states which shall not have notified, one year before the expiration of each period, the intention to cause it to go out of effect as far as they are concerned.

#### ORGANIC STATUTES.

The following are the organic statutes of the bureau:

ARTICLE 1. There is instituted at Paris an international office of public hygiene, amenable to the states which agree to take part in its operation.

ART. 2. The office can not, in any way, concern itself in the administration of the several states.

It is independent of the authorities of the country in which it is placed.

It corresponds directly with the superior authorities of hygiene of the several countries and with the sanitary councils.<sup>a</sup>

ART. 3. The Government of the French Republic will take, on request of the international committee contemplated by article 6, the necessary measures to cause the office to be recognized as an establishment of public utility.

ART. 4. The principal object of the office is to collect and bring to the knowledge of the participating states facts and documents of a general character interesting to public health, especially as concerns infectious diseases—notably cholera, plague, and yellow fever—as well as the measures taken to combat these diseases.

Article 2 of the organic statutes also authorizes the establishment of relations between the International Sanitary Bureau at Washington and the International Bureau of Public Hygiene at Paris. This relationship was brought about at the international sanitary convention held at Rome December 9 to 14, 1907, when Passed Asst. Surg. A. J. McLaughlin, delegate on behalf of the United States, presented to the above-mentioned convention the following resolution adopted by the Third International Conference of American States at Rio de Janeiro in 1906:

Recommending the establishment of relations between the International Sanitary Bureau now existing in Washington and the Bureau Sanitaire International of Paris in order to obtain the best information on sanitary subjects and to reach agreements that will facilitate the objects with which both offices are established.

The conference at Rome expressed through its president unanimous approval of the sentiment embodied in this resolution. The president consulted the conference and replied in its name that there was no doubt that article 2 of the organic statutes authorized direct communication between the two international sanitary bureaus, which would be the fulfillment of the desire expressed in article 3 of the Rio conference.

ART. 5. The governments inform the office of the measures which they will take to insure the application of international sanitary conventions. The office suggests the modifications which it may be advantageous to apply to the terms of these conventions.

ART. 6. The office is placed under the authority and control of an international committee which is composed of technical representatives designated by the participating states at the rate of one representative for each state.

There is assigned to each state a number of votes inversely proportioned to the number in the category to which it belongs as concerns its share in the expense of the office. (See article 2.)

ART. 7. The office committee meets periodically at least once a year. The duration of the sessions is not limited.

The members of the committee elect, by secret ballot, a president, whose term of office has a duration of three years.

ART. 8. The operation of the office is assured by a paid personnel, comprising a director, a secretary-general, and the necessary agents for the business of the office.

The personnel of the office shall not fill any other paid function.

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<sup>a</sup> It is understood that the term "sanitary councils" applies to the councils of Alexandria, Constantinople, Tangier, Teheran, and to all other councils which may be charged with the application of international sanitary conventions.

The director and the secretary-general are named by the committee.

The director assists at the meetings of the committee, with a consultative vote.

The nomination and revocation of employees of all grades belong to the director, who renders an account thereof to the committee.

ART. 9. The information collected by the office is brought to the knowledge of the participating states by means of a bulletin or by special communications addressed to them by the office, or on demand.

The office, in addition, makes a statement periodically of the results of its activity in special reports, which are communicated to the participating governments.

ART. 10. The bulletin, which appears at least once a month, comprises chiefly:

1. The laws and regulations, general or local, promulgated in the several countries concerning transmissible diseases.

2. Information concerning the progress of infectious diseases.

3. Information concerning work carried out or measures taken for the sanitation of localities.

4. Statistics relative to public health.

5. Bibliographical notes.

The official language of the office and the bulletin shall be French. The committee may decide that parts of the bulletin shall be published in other languages.

ART. 11. The expenses necessary for the operation of the office, estimated at 150,000 francs per annum, are covered by the States signatory to the convention, the contributions of which are fixed according to the following categories:

First category—Brazil, Spain, United States, Great Britain, British India, Italy, Russia, at the rate of 25 units.

Second category—At the rate of 20 units.

Third category—Belgium, Egypt, and Netherlands, at the rate of 15 units.

Fourth category—Switzerland, at the rate of 10 units.

Fifth category—At the rate of 5 units.

Sixth category—At the rate of 3 units.

This sum of 150,000 francs can not be exceeded without the consent of the signatory powers.

It is allowable to any state to enroll itself ultimately in a superior category.

The states which shall ultimately adhere to the convention will choose the category in which they desire to enroll themselves.

ART. 12. There is levied on the annual receipts a sum destined to constitute a reserve fund. The total of this reserve, which can not exceed the amount of the annual budget, is placed in the state funds of the first order.

ART. 13. The members of the committee shall receive from the fund appropriated to the operation of the office an indemnity for the cost of change of place. They shall receive, moreover, a fee for each of the sessions at which they assist.

ART. 14. The committee fixes the sum to be levied annually on its budget for contribution to secure a pension on retirement for the personnel of the office.

ART. 15. The committee establishes its annual budget and approves the report of expenses. It controls the organic regulation of the personnel, as well as all measures necessary for the operation of the office.

The said regulation and measures are communicated by the committee to the participating states and cannot be modified without their consent.

ART. 16. A statement of the administration of the funds of the office is presented annually to the participating states after the close of the exercises.

The committee that convened at the ministry of foreign affairs, in Paris, on November 4, 1908, represented the last step of the preparatory stage of the undertaking, or rather the beginning of its permanent form. It was composed of one representative from each of the contracting powers whose governments had ratified the above arrangement. Its duty was to actually create the bureau, draw up its regulations, provide for its expenses, and direct its first operations.

The members of this committee were: For Belgium, Mr. Oscar Velghe, director-general of the Belgian sanitary service; for Egypt, Dr. Marc Armand Ruffer, director of the Alexandria sanitary board; for France, Mr. Camille Barrere, French ambassador at Rome; for Great Britain, Dr. Theodore Thomson, local government board, London; for India, Sir Benjamin Franklin, surgeon-general (retired) India medical service; for Italy, Dr. Rocco Santoliquido, director of the Italian sanitary service; for Russia, Doctor Freyburg, imperial sanitary board; for Servia, Doctor Petrovitch; for Spain, Dr. F. Murillo, assistant director of the Spanish Institute of Hygiene; for Switzerland, Dr. F. Schmid, director of the Swiss sanitary council; for Tunis, Mr. George Harismendy, French consul of the first class; for the United States, Dr. S. B. Grubbs, United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

After the details of the office and its work had been considered and agreed upon, using the organic statutes as a basis, the most important matter was the choice of a director, as the ultimate success of the bureau must largely depend upon his ability and industry. It was decided that the position should not be restricted to medical men, as the diplomatic side of the director's duties will be quite as important as the scientific side. After considerable deliberation and discussion Mr. Jacques de Cazotte, minister plenipotentiary of the French diplomatic corps, was chosen. Mr. de Cazotte has served in many countries, speaks several languages fluently, and during many years of service in the department of foreign affairs has been the authority on the diplomatic and statistical sides of international sanitary matters.

To the office next in importance, viz., secretary-general, there was chosen Doctor Potevin, for several years the chief sanitary officer of the city of Havre, France. The installation and active work of the bureau were begun at once. Direct means of communication with all the sanitary bureaus of the world that agree to cooperate are to be established, and by these means and in all possible ways information of statistical, scientific, or practical interest regarding the greater epidemic diseases is to be gathered and information supplied to the governments that support the bureau.

In sanitary matters, probably as much as in any branch of governmental activity, early and accurate information is essential to good administration, and it is believed the International Office of Public Hygiene will be able to supply this information more economically, promptly, and in a more satisfactory form than could be done by the individual state.

As is customary in practically all European countries, a liberal retirement privilege and pensions have been provided for the personnel of this bureau, so that the undivided efforts of their best years may be given to the work without fear for the future.

The men chosen for director and secretary-general are distinguished in their callings, are full of zeal for the work, and will have the earnest support of the French Government, which has promised not only to officially recognize the bureau, but to give it permanent offices in the Department of Labor.

It is believed that the full exchange of ideas that will take place at the semiannual gathering of the governing committee, composed as it is of men of the highest authority and influence, will have a beneficial effect upon the march of international sanitation, and that as a central clearing house of sanitary information the bureau will become of the highest importance, both in the quarantine and the internal sanitary administration of the various countries of the world.

The foundations of the International Office of Public Hygiene have been laid as for an institution that is to be permanent. In organization it resembles the permanent International Postal Bureau and the Bureau of Weights and Measures, but in the field of sanitation it is original, being the result of long and persevering collaboration by men who believe that the greatest international publicity in sanitary matters is the first and most important step toward perfect sanitary control.

## UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Surgeon-General, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.]

*Reports from San Francisco, Cal.—Plague-prevention work at San Francisco, Oakland, and Point Richmond, and in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, Cal.*

Passed Assistant Surgeon Blue reports:

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

*Week ended December 26.*

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Date of last case .....  | Sickened January 30, 1908 |
| Sick inspected.....      | 6                         |
| Plague.....              | 0                         |
| Dead inspected.....      | 121                       |
| Plague.....              | 0                         |
| Premises inspected ..... | 9,586                     |
| Houses disinfected.....  | 13                        |
| Nuisances abated .....   | 785                       |